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February 15, 2011

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
108 Army Pentagon, Room 3E-446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to delay the implementation of its levee vegetation policy and work with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) to address the unintended consequences of implementing the existing policy.

The LACFCD has a long history of working closely with the Corps to ensure that the regional drainage systems included as part of the Los Angeles County Drainage Area Project are properly maintained in order to protect human life and property from damages caused by flood waters. The Corps' enforcement of Engineer Technical Letter 1110-2-571 will require removal of existing vegetation from miles of levees throughout the LACFCD. This is not a workable policy and has a number of unintended consequences that will put significant financial strains on the LACFCD and many of the communities it serves.

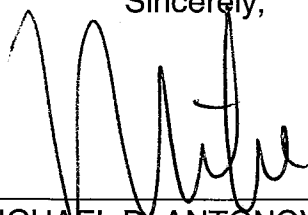
For example, removal of grant-funded landscaping projects could mean breaching terms of grant contracts and habitat removal will likely require significant mitigation efforts. The cumulative environmental impact of compliance with the policy may not be acceptable or feasible under current environmental laws. However, noncompliance with the levee vegetation policy puts the region in danger of not being eligible for Federal disaster assistance should a flooding disaster occur. The LACFCD believes that a balanced approach toward implementation of the policy could be achieved that ensures public safety and allows much needed flood protection work to proceed without compromising valuable natural resources.

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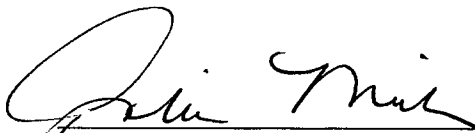
We, therefore, respectfully request the Corps to delay the implementation of its levee vegetation policy and work with the LACFCD and other local flood control agencies in California to address the unintended consequences of the policy and achieve balance between public safety and natural resources.

We look forward to your response and working together.

Sincerely,



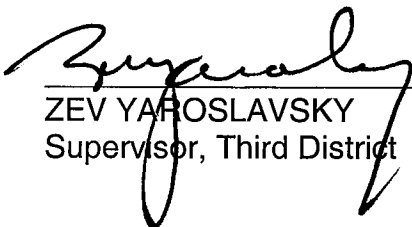
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Mayor, Board of Supervisors



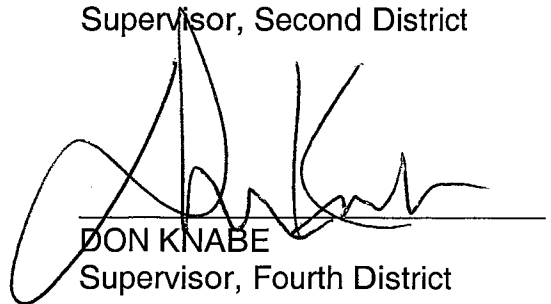
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